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KNOTTING MATTERS

The Magazine of the International Guild of Knot Tyers

INTERNATIONAL GUILD OF KNOT TYERS

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KNOTTING MATTERS

THE MAGAZINE OF THE INTERNATIONAL GUILD OF KNOT TYERS

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The editors welcome the submission of letters, articles, photographs and sketches for publication. Correspondence may be by e-mail knottingmatters@igkt.net but more extensive items, such as articles for publication, as well as any pictures, which should be of good quality need to be sent as attachments. All submissions must include their author's name and e-mail or postal address.

If events are to be publicised in *Knotting Matters*, note the months of publication - March, June, September and December. Although the deadline for the next issue is given at the foot of the Contents page, please note that the editors begin putting it together at least three weeks earlier.

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KNOTTING MATTERS

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Pull-out: A net shopping bag. Don't forget to pass it on.

PLEASE NOTE: LETTERS & ARTICLES FOR THE JUNE 2019 *KNOTTING MATTERS* MUST BE RECEIVED BY *APRIL 30TH*

FRONT COVER: A fencing knot - wire to post attachment - see p18

EDITORIAL

We trust you all are well on the way to a Happy New Year! Isn't this going to be a great year for knotting! We're actually holding the Spring Symposium and AGM in the heart of the Dorset Riviera (AGM papers enclosed). No better excuse needed for a great visit to Weymouth, UK. Let's get the numbers up again; go on, give yourselves a treat - Sun, Sea, Sand, and like-minded colleagues from all over the world. Please make the effort to come, it really does matter.

Please note the Stop Press on page 10 – early information about an unusually kind benefactor, whose generosity will allow some members opportunities not otherwise open to them. And on page 11, we learn about a substantial addition to the website, a 17-page *Glossary of Practical Knotting*, a considerable and well thought-out work aimed at standardizing knotting terminology for us all.

Back to the March edition which contains an eclectic mix of letters and articles from the outright academic to the intensely practical which is marvelous. We editors can only work with what we are sent, and strange as it might seem, that is where you come in. Get writing. Our sincere thanks to those of you who contributed to this issue.

I was particularly taken with the fencing wire piece, loving the detail of twisting the ends to avoid damage to man and beast. It's an excellent example from an actual practitioner of something which, if you spend any time at all out of doors, will be right under your nose, yet not many of us notice. Does anyone have similar observations of everyday life to contribute? What we want is someone to write to say 'We do it like this round here!'. We are an educational charity after all, which surely includes learning from each other.

And watch out for details of how to participate in World Knot Tying Day (see page 39) – raising the profile of knots and knotting. There must be thousands round the world, young and old, from all walks of life, up for a knotting selfie, or even a group photo.

And talking about spreading the word, the Pull-Out this issue is *KM* editors' answer to the global problem of plastic pollution. A string shopping bag to cut down the use of disposables. **Please pass it on to a young person and help them to make it, if help is needed. Better still, photocopy it and give it to a group - of cubs, scouts, guides or others. That's what these pull-outs are meant for: to drum up interest in the next generation of knot tyers.**
Gordon

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Maurice,

I have just received my *Knotting Matters* today, and here I go, seeing another article challenging knots in the Boy Scouts. Firstly, I would like to clarify that the Wood Badge is an advanced leadership training course, you would be expected to learn all your knot skills in Introduction to Outdoor Leader Skills for Boy Scouts and Baloo training for Cub Scouts. When I went through Wood Badge we were required to tie our own woggle.

I have been a scoutmaster for 29 years, a girl scout leader for 20 years and a district and council trainer. I teach knots at all levels of scouting. The knots that I teach in Boy Scouts, I also teach to Girl Scouts. I have knot-boards on which all my knots are tied at least twice, once tied loose so people can see how to tie them, and also tied tight so they know what the finished knot looks like. I have attached a list of knots* that are required for Cub Scouts, Boy Scout and Sea Scout rank advancement and for the Boy Scout Merit Badges except for First Aid.

Thank you

Matthew C Allmaras

*the list can be found on the website www.igkt.net under Knotting Matters Supplements - Ed

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Dear Maurice

Re: the article in *KM* 141 Scouts and Knots.

It is true that knots are not compulsory in the Scout Association any more. However that does not mean knot tying does not happen. In today's world there are other options and these should be taught. We also teach the use of GPS but that does not mean we do not teach scouts how to use a compass.

However, from my experience as a Local Training Manager and County Trainer in the county where I live, there aren't many leaders who don't learn some knotting during their training, either during Scouting Skills or the Camping Course. I find that once you start teaching the adults some knots they want to learn more, and well enough to be able to pass them on.

Also, I have never been to a scout troop or cub pack to teach something to do with knotting and not found the youngsters most enthusiastic to learn more, be it woggles, survival bracelets, key fobs or pioneering.

I don't feel it is lamentable that it is not compulsory. The Scout Association is trying to teach "skills for life" which must include as much as possible.

Therefore it is incumbent on us as members of IGKT to get involved and teach what we are good at and thereby uphold the aims of the IGKT.

It is rare to go to a scouting event and not find somebody knotting, but we can't all be good at everything

Best wishes

Clive Sandrey

Dear Maurice,

I have just received the IGKT-badge and attached it to my ditty bag, which I sewed myself. It is made of rough canvas, 43cm/16.9in height and 22cm/8.7in in diameter. It has a cord (6mm/0.24in polypropylene kernmantle) on top to close it. On the flat bottom it has another cord (5mm/0.2in braided cotton cord) with loops big enough to receive the diamond knot of the upper cord. With this simple system one can adjust the length of the shoulder strap when carrying the bag. The cords are different only because both were leftovers.

It took me around three hours to make the bag. Most of the work was done with a regular sewing machine, only small parts with thick layers were sewn by hand. All the inner seams are covered with a bias tape. Metal eyelets prevent the holes in the upper rim from tearing. The lower cord is not sewn into the bottom but put through a small webbing loop so it can be changed easily.

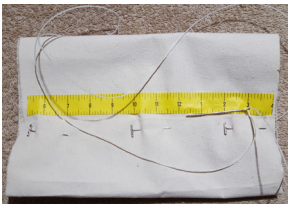
Best regards,

Alex, Vienna

Dear Maurice,

In the March 2018 edition of *KM* was a note about the lack of response to the offering of ditty bag kits and finding out that the wrong email address had been used. After this note, I requested a bag kit again and in short order received one in the post. Enclosed I found two types of material, denim and canvas as well as hardware.

Due to the size and shape of the material I received I chose to make two small bags. If I had made a single bag mine would have been short in height and wide in diameter. Instead the two bags I blanked are close in height and diameter to the ratio I am used to seeing.



With the assistance of my wife, who does not like me using her sewing scissors or rotary cutter, the material was cut and pinned together.

After several false starts and stops, I finally got one bag sewn, though not nearly as neat as I would have liked, I did learn on it.

I chose to use only three of the metal rings that were included and plan to use the rest on the second bag I hope to sew in the very near future. Next though, I need to tie a handle for the one bag that is done.

I would like to say thank you for sending out the kits. I would encourage anyone else who received one to send in photos of what you have done.

Patrick Glisson

Dear Editors,

I have been shown the latest *KM* by my husband, Jeff Wyatt (a past President of the Guild), and in response to the comment "Even our own past issues are not very well indexed" I can only assume that the detailed index for at least the first 100 issues has not reached your collective hands. Every article, every quote, every letter, every comment, every picture, every report, every tutorial, every Book Review was listed in that index which was done by myself (not even a member of the Guild), and handed to the then Editor of *KM* (Colin Grundy) who arranged it for publication - in a bright red cover! Also, every *KM* from 1 to 100 was digitised by Colin, an enormous task I think you'll agree. I believe at one stage there was a thought to upload it all to the website, but I don't know how far that went. If it was, I'm not sure if it was transferred over when the website changed a few years ago.

Yours sincerely

Lesley Wyatt

From the Editors:

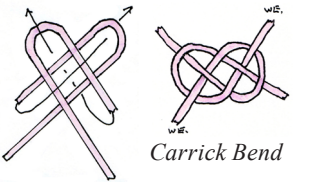
Maurice contacted Lesley and Jeff to apologise sincerely for the apparent disregard of their extensive work on the first 100 issues. We had no intention to disparage their dedicated efforts. It remains true, however, that it would be beneficial to have a searchable electronic index of the full KM collection.

Dear Maurice

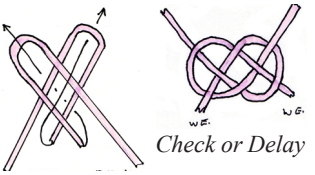
To a knotsman, the Carrick bend must be one of the most easily recognised by its configuration. The knot can be traced back to between 1400 and 1300 BC, to paintings in the tomb of Tut-Anuk. The basic structure of the Carrick bend has been found in Africa, Persia, Greece and China. Though we know it best from Celtic and Pictish art.

It is not known when it became the Carrick bend as we now call it. It must have been used before the 11th century AD, when it was known as the Wake knot (a heraldic knot on Hereward the Wake's shield 1036-1072).

I think it was the British Navy that gave it the current name, linking it to Falmouth. The river Fal is known as the Carrick roads, because of boats called Carricks which traded between Falmouth and Truro. The motif for the Falmouth district is the Carrick bend. The structure in drawings and paintings is misleading as it has four equal ends, the same structure as the Check or Delay knots (*ABOK* #1559).



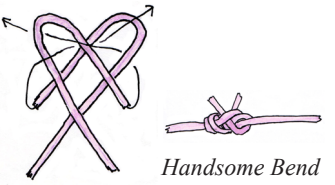
Carrick Bend



Check or Delay

The Carrick bend has working ends and standing parts on opposite sides of the knot. The Check or Delay knot has both working ends on the bottom of the knot. The Check or Delay was a decorative knot across the end of a gang plank, doorway or stairway. It could be classed as the first 'No entry' sign. I first tied the Carrick and Delay knot the Falmouth way before I joined the guild in 1984, both versions were submitted in 1985 along with more knots. The Carrick bend was in *KM* 23, the Falmouth way.

In tying the Carrick bend the latter way (a tribute to holidays and fishing in Falmouth), it does not matter whether the right or left hand loop is on the top, the result will be the same. In tying the Check or Delay knot the two loops are reversed so that the working ends are on the inside.



Handsome Bend

If you combine the two, one loop from the Carrick and one loop from the Check or Delay you will get a different type of Carrick Bend called the Carrick Twist. If you take the Carrick Bend and use two tucks you will get a bend called the Handsome Bend (before tightening, ease the two loops to the top of the knot), another tribute to Cornwall, where 'handsome' is a term of endearment (eg "you'm welcome to Cornwall, me 'andsome") as well as meaning beautiful, *KM* 54.

Owen K Nuttall

Hi Maurice,

If, like me, you thought it would be a good idea to wait 'till your other half vacated the premises for a goodly length of time so that you can put the 90ft of rope you so laboriously converted into an Ocean Plat to adorn the front door, in the washing machine, then don't. You will have dozens of crossings and it will look like three very large dogs have played tug of war with it for a week. ("You are NOT putting that stupid thing in my machine, all it does is collect dirt." I wondered what else it was supposed to do?)

So just don't do it unless you can guarantee at least half a day, plus the time to acquire a decent mallet, and further time to get it dry enough to avoid getting a fair-sized damp patch on the spare room carpet and the time to beat the thing into something resembling what it started out as. Modern day machines with their high spin-speeds, reversing washing cycles etc, can wreak utter havoc with things like this. If you can deal with all that, then all you have to weather is the gimlet-eyed stare and the question, "What have you done with that mat?" To which the answer is, "Oh, I just gave it a wipe over with a damp rag." Live to fight another day!

Best Regards,

Cazbil.

A letter to IGKT's Supplies Secretary Terry Barns

Hi Terry,

I received Charlie's Knots on Saturday!

I have been refreshing my brain on the 7Bx4L Turks Head which I used to tie a lot at the 1993 Navy Days when we were displaying our rigging work in North Yard rigging house! I used to make bracelets for the young girls so they had a reminder of their visit.

I think it was that year that I met Charlie. The IGKT had a display in the Drill Hall at HMS Drake, or it was the Navy Days before or after, I am not sure, but I do remember seeing you twice, both times on Navy Days.

I am surprised not to see Ship's Rigger listed as a user of knots*; they did rig the ships and the sailors/seamen did the repairs! Speaking as an ex-seaman I started my training in 1956 on a sailing ship and then in the Royal Navy. After 9 years' service I joined Chatham Dockyard and passed for a ship's rigger in 1970. I transferred to Devonport Dockyard in 1982. So knots have been a big part of my life!

Yours sincerely

Brian Lacey

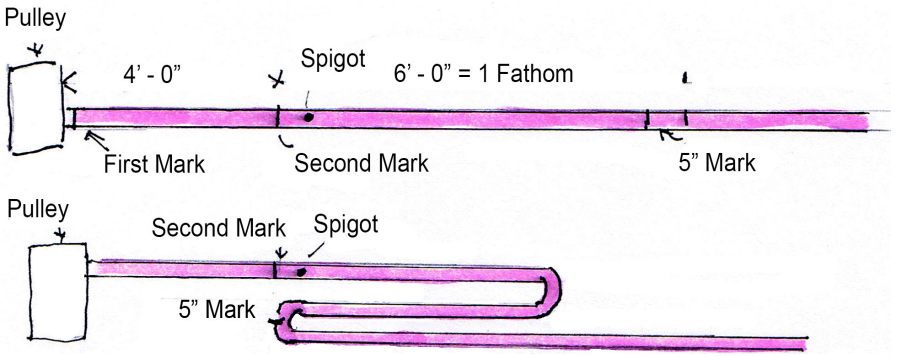
*(*Charlie's Knots reprint has a non-exhaustive list of knot users on the back cover - Ed)*

Dear Maurice,

In the section on hangings at sea, Ashley's book p59, there are two discrepancies One, the spigot would be more than four feet from the yardarm pulley. This depended on the distance between the forecastle pulley and the yardarm pulley. The second is the six-foot drop. Was this from the boatswain's experience or speculation?

William Marwood, England's hangman 1871, was credited with the long drop. He calculated that the drop needed for a victim of a certain weight, was 1260 divided by their weight in pounds. Thus for a man of 15 stone (210lbs) it was 6ft (1260/210), and for a 10 stone (140lb) man, 9ft (1260/140). The dividend was altered to 1,000 instead of 1,260 in 1888 by the Aberdare report (*KM* 64).

After making sure that the hanging rope was in perfect working order, the boatswain's most important job with his knotting skills and experience was the hoist and the Sheepshank. The rope would be put through the forecastle and yardarm pulleys. He would then tie a Hangman's noose. He would hold the noose in one hand and pull the rope from the forecastle pulley until the noose was at head height. Then a mark would be put in the rope where it would touch the forecastle pulley. From there another mark would be put in, four feet from the first mark. A spigot would be tied in behind the second mark with a marling spike hitch *ABOK* #659. With his knotting knowledge he would know the exact length of a six-foot-drop-Sheepshank. This would be tied in with four- or six-inch loops, one being be secured just in front of the spigot with light twine, the other end would be half-hitched with rope.



When the victim was hauled aloft 10ft by members of the ship's crew, the Sheepshank would hit the forecastle pulley collapsing the Sheepshank. The spigot would hit the forecastle pulley at the same time, ensuring the 6ft 'dead drop'.

Owen K Nuttall

Dear Maurice,

A recent survey quoted on the BBC reveals that about 50% of school children are unable to tie their shoelaces! Shoe manufacturers think that laces, complete with aglets, will become obsolete and disappear completely in a few years. As an educational charity where did we go wrong? What are members' children or grandchildren doing? Is this the end of an era?

It could be the tail wagging the dog, the little dears refusing to tie laces, or even to wear shoes if they have laces. Perhaps the parents don't know how, or care.

When digital watches became popular, every child wanted one. Asking a child the time, you got a bunch of numbers, they had no real idea what they meant, out went 'nearly half past' or 'getting on for quarter to' and so on. You can 'see' the time on an analogue device. My boy didn't get one 'till that was mastered, and only then so as not to be out of step with his peers. Early clocks had no minute-hand never mind a second-hand. Harrison must be turning in his grave.

N King

Dear Maurice,

The ABC, the Australian version of the BBC, airs a quirky quiz program in which contestants are questioned on a specialised subject of their choosing as well as a variety of other subjects. The quirkiness of the program lies in the manner of the quick-witted quizmaster who is adept at the 'put-down' and off-putting comments, while the contestants are equally free to retaliate in kind.

A recent edition featured a gentleman who had nominated 'Knots' for his specialty. At the end of each round the lowest scorer departs. Our knotter won through to the head-to-head final, and was up against an exceptionally knowledgeable gentleman whose special subject was Sherlock Holmes. I am happy to report that our knotter, an IGKT member, won on the last question about the name of the Inca knotting system of keeping records.

Congratulations Darren Samphier for winning 'Hard Quiz' and giving Tom Gleeson as good as he got.

Frank Brown

Dear Maurice,

I've always had a love for knots and learned about 85 in my heyday in Scouting. I didn't get to do many marine knots.

I would like to formally register this knot because I believe it has been around for years and should really have a name.

I realise that a knot should be useful, though this one isn't.

A knot should be easy to tie; this one is difficult to untie, and is to be found in every country in the world.

If it were to be recognized by the International Guild of Knot Tyers, I believe the most apt name for the knot would be 'The Pocket Knot'.

Thank you,
Best wishes,
Joe Robinson
Ireland

Dear Maurice,

On a visit to friends in Yorkshire, I was pleased to see the decorative dressing of a doorway between a bedroom and the adjacent bathroom which needs to take a wheelchair. To judge by the neat and consistent splices, the material is artificial hemp of some brand. The 'curtain' serves its purpose well – a more solid door or even a more conventional curtain would not be as appropriate in the circumstances. I was unable to find out who spliced the ropes, but they mostly knew what they were about.

David Pepper

STOP PRESS

The Trustees wish to inform members that they have received a generous donation from George Hart, with which they intend to set up the Captain George Hart Educational Bursary Fund

The fund will be used to award bursaries to IGKT members who wish to pursue a knotting activity, approved by the Trustees, which they would otherwise be unable to undertake.

Full details of the bursaries, the qualifying criteria and how to apply will be published in the June 2019 issue of *Knotting Matters*.

Meanwhile, on behalf of IGKT members, we offer our sincere thanks to George Hart.

A Glossary for Knot Tyers
by Robert Birch

In October 2018, Robert Birch e-mailed the secretary of the Executive Committee to ask if the Guild would be interested in taking on (possibly on the website) a *Glossary for Knot Tyers*, and attached a 17-page draft of his proposed glossary. He explained further: "To see if it was possible, I had a go. I guess the challenge might be reaching consensus, as knot terminology has been a bit chaotic. But perhaps that is all the more reason for IGKT to take a lead."

Following exchanges with the *KM* editors about style and format, and discussion by the Trustees and Executive Committee on the principle of IGKT hosting such a Glossary, Robert came back with: "Encouraged overall by the feedback from senior members of IGKT, I have worked on an improved version which addresses the suggestions they made".

It has always been clear that Robert's glossary focused on practical knots. His view was that "Perhaps someone with the relevant interest will make a complementary or supplementary Glossary for Decorative Knot Tyers."

The Glossary, which remains the copyright of Robert Birch, will be available on the website www.igkt.net - follow a link on the home page. It seems likely that a glossary of this sort will be the subject of discussion.

The editors are aware of recent wide-ranging conversations about knot terminology amongst members of IGKT France, and wonder if Robert's initiative might lead to the construction of similar glossaries in other languages to be considered for inclusion on the IGKT website.

Robert Birch

Robert has been tying and teaching practical knots for more than 50 years, mostly on land and sometimes on the water. In his professional life he worked as a scientist, a professor in plant and microbial molecular biology. Recently he has learned with, and taught knots to, men and women who need to tie and use knots under demanding conditions to preserve life and property. In knotting, as in any field, teaching shows how much there is still to learn, and how important it is to find clear terms that respect, wherever possible, established uses in the art.

A Portable Knot Rig

by Frank Brown

Several years ago, a friend built a 'Six Knot Challenge' rig for me. It was based on a picnic table and had fold-up legs plus a cross-bar for tying hitches. It was fairly heavy, needed wing-nuts to lock the legs, and with cross-bar support in place it was awkward to store. When dismantled the ropes were bundled and tied to the demountable cross bar. The wing nuts (and spares) were stored in a plastic box fixed to the base with gaffer tape. It all worked, but it was a pain. However it had the advantage that it could also be used for teaching or displaying knots. With these points in mind I designed and built a more portable and less cumbersome rig.

The picture (right) shows the finished article which weighs 10kg. It measures 800 x 650 x 90 mm and sits comfortably on a standard card table, though I would advise a more substantial support in competition work.

The picture (left) shows the rig opened displaying the components. The cross-bar is not shown but it fits inside with the lid closed.

The next picture shows the lengths of rope threaded through holes in the side of the rig. Each of the ropes shown is the same length, so no selection is necessary. In addition, there are two longer ropes, identified easily by red whipping, which are threaded through at the back of the rig, if needed when demonstrating or teaching.

This picture shows the cross-bar assembled, ready to be located on top of the rig. The demountable bar is fixed in place using two metal pins attached to the uprights by cords. The locating bolts at the base of the uprights are steel and glued in position using Araldite. These slide through receiving holes in the lid and into holes in secured blocks. Two pieces of plywood at the base of the uprights help stabilise the structure.

The picture below shows the assembled rig with the notorious Six. The carrying handle was deliberately made long to provide another anchoring point when required for demonstrating such things as the “Trucker’s Hitch” which is a frequent request in my experience.

Most of the timber used is pine with the exception of the hardwood blocks holding and receiving the bolts/pins. The rope is 8mm CCC (Cheap, Cheerful, Chinese) and is less pliable than nylon braid of the same size used in the original rig. The brass latch is secured with a miniature karabiner permanently attached by cord to the handle. At the time of writing the rig had not been tested in combat, but I am confident it will meet the challenge.

A Funny Thing Happened to Me

by Uqda

I was sitting quietly on the bus, reading a book when these words jumped out and caught my attention! '…he said sharply. "It's called a double constrictor knot. It's like a clove hitch but with an overhand knot under two riding turns… In fact it's one of the most effective binding knots in the world. Been around at least since the 1860s. It's also called the Gunner's knot"...'[1]

Now I know the Constrictor Knot, but was less sure of the Double Constrictor Knot and even less so the Gunner's Knot, so I marked the page and hurried home. As I delved into my meagre resources – knotting ones of course – it quickly became clear that I was opening a can of worms!

I need a little aside here to simplify things later. During the search process, I found an excellent article by Pieter Van de Griend[2] which contained everything I had and more, so I will use Pieter's text for what follows.

Looking at Tom Bowling[3] (1899) and Tom Burgess electronic copy (nd) p61, both of which talk of the Gunner's Knot being a variant of the Builder's Knot (now usually known as the Clove Hitch[4]) in which the ends are knotted, but neither provides an image of what that means.

While looking online for other possible 'old' sources, I found a reference to a Wikipedia article 'Constrictor knot'[5] which made reference to the aforementioned "Pieter van de Griend (July 2007). 'The Constrictor Knot Revisited', *Knot News*. International Guild of Knot Tyers - Pacific Branch (62).So off I went on a tangential quest: the first place to look seemed to be our Pacific Americas Branch, so I wrote to their representative, as listed in *KM*, asking if they could help, while at the same time contacting Des Pawson and Colin Byfleet with the same request. Cutting a long story short, not a peep from Pacific Americas – even months later – but a file transfer by return from Des with the requested text. Thanks Des!

Meanwhile, back at the ranch house, as it were, and one idea leading to another, I then thought to contact David Baldacci. In the front of his book: "... he invites you to visit him at www.DavidBaldacci.com" so off I went and sent a message

1 Baldacci, David, *Memory Man*, Pan Books, 2015, 549-550.
2 Pieter Van de Griend 'The Constrictor Knot Revisited', *Knot News*, July 2007, #62.
3 Tom Bowling, *The Book of Knots*, Edinburgh, 1899, p 8.
4 This could lead to another piece of research. Why/when did the Builder's knot stop being called the Builder's knot and who is responsible for this change in name?
5 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Constrictor_knot

along the lines, of "Are you a knot enthusiast or did you go looking for this information because of the plot? It would be fantastic if you could let me know the sources that you used" I also explained that I am a member of the IGKT and and that it would be great if we were able to publish his reply in *KM.*

Will you be surprised to hear that I haven't yet heard back, six months later? In any case, I am sending this off to *KM* in the belief that I won't receive a response.

Reading Pieter's article has been an education! From him we learn that the oldest known illustration of the Constrictor Knot is in the - then unpublished – *Bushby Notes*. Isn't it a pity that we didn't include that drawing in the IGKT edition of Bushby?

We also learn that Öhrval talks of the Constrictor Knot as the *Timmerknut* (Timber Knot) but does not illustrate it. The honour of the first published illustration of the Constrictor Knot falls to Martta Ropponen in *Solmukirja*, 1931, where she calls it the *Ruoskaolmu* or 'Whip knot'.[1] One piece of information that I came across that is not in Pieter's article is that A. Hyatt Verrill published *Knots, Splices and Rope Works* in 1912 in which he gives, as Fig 37, an image [below] of the Gunner's Knot.

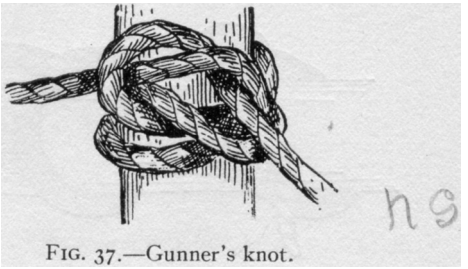


FIG. 37.—Gunner's knot.

While the 'Knot' might almost fit the Tom Bowling description: "Fig. 47 [1.] Double Builder's Knot, which is considerably stronger. The Gunner's Knot (of which we do not give a diagram) only differs from the Builder's Knot, by the ends of the cords being simply knotted before being brought from under the loop which crosses them." The NG in pencil is an Ashley annotation which Des Pawson takes to mean 'No (or not) Good'. Which might explain why Pieter didn't mention it.

Coming back to my novel, of course, I also came across the Double Constrictor Knot (#1252) in trawling through the sources, but nowhere did I find a link between the Gunner's Knot and the Double Constrictor Knot, though the reference to the 'Double Builder's Knot' might have misled a researcher, so I do hope that DB gets back to me!

Another aside is that the name: 'Timber Knot' comes up in Öhrval as the Swedish name for the Constrictor Knot. Looking at Castelli & Ponti, the Timber Hitch is 'Nodo del Muratore' the 'Builders Knot' which in Bowling *et al* is the Clove Hitch.

1 The information in these two paragraphs is all from Pieter's article.

Experimenting with Grommets

by Mac Mackenzie

Just to get 2019 on the move, I thought I'd submit some pics of my recent grommet-making efforts. For anyone interested in having a shot at a straightforward single-strand 8-plait grommet, I would point them in the direction of Mikko Snellman's excellent tutorial at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CyQHK77uznA&t=374s . I was going to try and put the process into words but the tutorial does the job in a straightforward and explanatory manner with some coffee-dipped cord on the second round to highlight the splicing more effectively. Having had some success with the tutorial, I decided I would have a go at the 8-Plait Trefoil Knot Grommet version, and then stepped up to a 5Bx3L Single Strand 8-Plait Turks Head Grommet.

I find that the key to this game is in the setting-up of the four passes that make up the base of the grommet (into which the second half is spliced). It's very important to make sure that the laying-up of the four passes is done in a relaxed and orderly fashion, and that you do not deviate from the path on each pass. The fourth pass brings you back to your standing end (where you should temporarily seize together the working and standing ends) at which point you divert the working end over-2 under-2, back and forth to make your first round of splicing into the base on the sides of your work. As you are doing this, make sure you are travelling from side to side only on the splicing (back and forth) and that you're not twisting around the work (towards top or bottom).

When you arrive for your second round of splicing (and looking at the back of the work) the over-2 under-2 brings you to the front of the first over-2 you made when you spliced back in on the first round. This under-2 splits the two base passes that come through this bight.

Once you establish that this happens after every over-2 under-2 as you work round the grommet (splitting the two strands coming through the previous bight) it becomes very easy to make sure that you are on track. It then just becomes very logical. I was quite surprised when my trefoil grommet came together on the first attempt, and startled when the same thing happened on the Turks Head. See pics of both projects. I'm quite proud of both of these: a real sense of achievement.

As an aside, after making my first 8-plait I went on to make a regular 12-plait (Base grommet of six passes laid up followed by six passes of over-3 under-3). I was successful with this, but noted that it didn't look much different from the 8-plait, just a little more 'packed'.

I then went on (using a makeshift circle of electrical wire as a mandrel) to lay up bases of 10 and 12 strands for 20- and 24-plait grommets (over-5 under-5 for the 20-plait and over-6 under-6 for the 24-plait). Whilst the structure of each of these efforts worked (after many hours of tying) it turns out that the whole thing just gets too crowded to tighten effectively. It really doesn't look that great despite the satisfaction of putting it together. The moral of this story is (particularly in this instance) - less is more - whilst, for me, the simplest of the lot, the 8-plait is by far the most handsome and effective.

NOTICE TO ALL MEMBERS

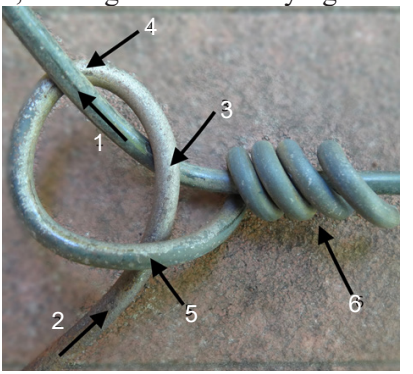
If you have recently changed any of your contact details (post or e-mail), please send the updated information by e-mail to: membership@igkt.net or by mail to: IGKT Membership Secretary, 15 Spey Close, Thornbury, Bristol, BS35 2NR, UK

THIS IS THE ONLY WAY TO ENSURE YOUR DETAILS ARE CHANGED

Fencing Knots ‘Gondwanan Style’

by Leanne Huxley

I attended the Stourport meeting in 2018, more as an observer than as an active knotting enthusiast, as I didn’t believe that I had ever consciously tied a serious knot. A conversation with David Pepper about all things farm-related (as you do) proved this not to be the case. A number of years ago, I did a course in small-area farming with the intention of one day owning a small acreage. Part of that course involved fencing and, of course, fencing knots. Knot tying with fencing wire is not easy and so the knots need to be simple as well as strong. So here is an example of how I learnt to attach fencing wire to a post. The picture is self-explanatory and the result is quick, strong and tidy.



No 1 Around the post

No 2 Back from around the post

No 3 Over-1

No 4 Under-1

No 5 Over-1

No 6 Wind around No 1 (under, over, under, over).

The other knot I learnt is for joining two pieces of fencing wire. Fences are broken by disrespectful wombats, erratic emus and carefree kangaroos. Essentially the knot I learnt is a Reef knot created by reeving the end of one line through, behind and back through a closed loop in the other. The free ends can then be wound around the main wire so as not to be a hazard to animals. As the wire is then tensioned (via a tensioner located somewhere along the strand) the Reef knot pulls nice and tight.

There are many, many fencing knots out there. These are just two that I happen to know.

A Wall Knot by Any Other Name

by Maurice McPartlan

Not long ago, we three ~~grumpy~~ wise old editors, had to prepare a single-page tutorial on how to tie a 4-strand Matthew Walker. But then we got into a discussion on whether this was a Single or Double Matthew Walker. See if you agree with me that it is neither!

In order to look at the underlying principles I would like to start with a 3-strand rope, because this is what is described in most books. I have delved into some of them and come up with the following:

If we tuck each end under the next one, in such a way that the ends point upwards, we have a 3-strand Wall Knot. (**1**)

If we then take each strand and tuck it under a second strand we have a 3-strand 'Single Matthew Walker'. (**2**)

If we then tuck each strand under yet another, so that in effect it exits under itself, we have what seems to be defined as a 3-strand Double (or Full) Matthew Walker. (**3**) It might be worth here stopping and taking stock.

The use of 'double' and 'full' is correct, but can be misleading. If we use the connotation of single, double, triple etc. to be equal to the number of tucks minus one - as 1 tuck is a Wall Knot - then we can describe any Matthew Walker of any number of strands by the number of tucks-1 that each strand makes.

Now if we move on to 4 strands:

One tuck and we have a 4-strand Wall Knot (**I**). Two tucks and we have a Lanyard Knot which, by analogy with the 3-strand version, should also be a 4-strand Single Matthew Walker (**II**). Three tucks would give a 4-strand Double Matthew Walker (**III**) and four tucks would lead to a 4-strand Triple (or Full) Matthew Walker (**IV**). But here I find myself at odds with Mr Ashley, (heresy?): "If a 4-strand Wall is tucked once, a Lanyard Knot is made; if tucked twice a 4-strand Matthew Walker is made, and if tucked three times a Four-strand Full or Double Matthew Walker Knot is made. Any knot of this variety in which the number of strands and the number of tucks are equal is a Full Matthew Walker Knot and any knot of one tuck only, with any number of strands, is a Wall Knot."[1]

1 *ABOK* p129

The use of ‘Double’ as an interchangeable term for ‘Full’ is leading to the lack of clarity! ‘Double’ and ‘Full’ can only be used together for a 3-strand Matthew Walker.

The above-quoted text from *ABOK* would suggest that Ashley defines a Full Matthew Walker as one in which the number of strands and tucks are equal[1] and a Single Matthew Walker can be made by removing one tuck from a Full Matthew Walker.[2]

It seems that Ashley and I have no problem when it comes to single strands:

“A Single-strand Matthew Walker Knot tucked once is a Wall Knot or a Single overhand Knot. A single strand tucked twice is a Double Overhand Knot, and a single strand tucked three times is a Triple Overhand Knot.” *ABOK* p129.

Double Strands:

ABOK #795: “A Lanyard Knot, made from two interlocked Overhand Knots. When completed, this turns out to be a Two-strand Matthew Walker knot.”[3]

ABOK #2421: “The True-Lover’s Knot. This again consists of two interlocked Overhand Knots which form what is actually a Two-strand Matthew Walker…”

What follows are the relevant sections from early books on knotting with the odd comment where I thought it necessary:

J T Burgess, *Knots Ties and Splices,* Routledge, London, 1884, p91:

“The knot known as the Matthew Walker is formed as at Fig 178. The whipping is first put on; the strands are opened; one strand is taken round the rope and through its own bight, then the next strand underneath through the bight of the first and through its own bight, and the third strand underneath. When taut it has the appearance of Fig. 179.” {Fig 178 is of a Full Matthew Walker.}

J T Burgess, ***Knots Ties and Splices***, **ed. J. Irving**, Routledge, London 1949, pp 96-97:

“The knot known as a Matthew Walker is formed as shewn in Fig 203. The whipping is first put on; the strands are opened; one strand is taken round the

1 Here I agree with Ashley.
2 Here I disagree! (Except for a three-strand Matthew Walker of course).
3 Using my above-reasoned definition this could also be called a 2-strand Single (or Full) Matthew Walker.

rope and through its own bight, then the next strand is dipped underneath through the bight of the first and through its own bight and the third strand underneath. When hauled taut it has the appearance of Fig 204.

It is of importance however, that the difference between the making of a single wall knot and a Single Matthew Walker should be noted.

To make a Double Matthew Walker each strand is interlaced with the other two strands and is then dipped up through its own bight."

{Fig. 203 in this later edition is the same as Fig 178 in the earlier Burgess edition (not edited by Irving), though here it purports to be a Single Matthew Walker.

Furthermore the descriptions for the Single and Double Matthew Walker end up with a strand passing "through its own bight", which would seem to be incorrect for the three-strand Single Matthew Walker.}

HNG Bushby, ***Notes on Knots***, IGKT, UK, 2016 (written circa 1902) p145 talks of a "Wall through two bights. Other names: Single Matthew Walker", p164: "Wall through Two Bights (2 strands) = 2-strand Matthew Walker."

"This Wall through Two Bights is a connecting link between the Single Wall (through one – the adjacent bight) and the Matthew Walker on p157 (through three bights.) For which reason some term it a Single Matthew Walker and others, confusing it with the Pigtail on p154." p146

"Matthew Walker Other Names - Double Matthew Walker." p.156.

Cyrus Day, ***Knots and Splices***, Coles, London, 1962, p42-43.

"60. The Matthew Walker Knot is similar to the wall knot, except that each strand comes up through the bights of the next two strands…, instead of through the bight of the next strand. One way to tie it is to begin with a wall knot…. Then before working the knot taut bring the end of each strand up through the bight of one more strand….

61. The Double Matthew Walker Knot is similar to the Matthew Walker …, except that each strand comes up through the next three bights … instead of through the next two bights.

62. The Lanyard Knot is a Matthew Walker tied in four-strand rope. It was used as a stopper knot in the days of hemp shrouds to prevent the lanyards from unreeving through the deadeyes…."

{It is difficult to conclude anything from the Cyrus Day text as he doesn't deal with evolutions of more-than-three-strand Matthew Walkers.

In *The Art of Knotting & Splicing* (pp192-194 for the Matthew Walker and the Double Matthew Walker knots and p196 for the Lanyard Knot) uses similar language.}

15th International Knot Exhibition

by Carol Wang

Forty minutes from downtown Tokyo by commuter train lies what appears to be the sleepy town of Kamakura, Kaganara. I say 'appears', because there are hi-tech parking turntables and elevators everywhere which means that it is probably a lot less sleepy and a lot more populated than it seems at first glance. Walking distance from the train station is the Kamakura Performing Art Centre which, conveniently for us, also has museum-style galleries. The first week of November is Culture Week in Kamakura and this display space was apparently hotly contested. The Japanese Traditional Knot Association (https://www.traditional-japanese-knots.com/) won the week in a lottery.

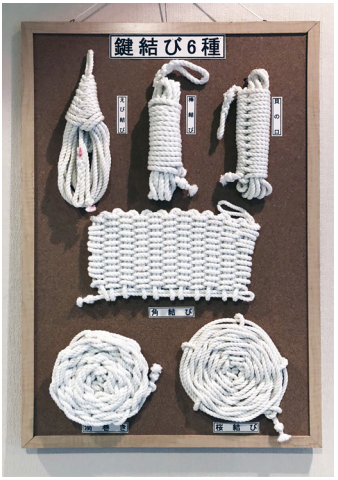
I had been corresponding with a Korean member of the organizing committee, and when it became clear that we would not be able to rustle up a gallery's worth of North American participants, it was decided that I would be a guest of the Korean gallery, as were the French contingent. At the last minute, Loren Damewood contributed a pair of pieces that joined mine in the display case.

As might be expected, since participants generally deliver their exhibit pieces in person, the host country, Japan, filled two galleries to Korea's one. Unfortunately, China did not participate due to 'politics' (I *think*. Ad hoc conversational translation by lay people is not exactly precise.)

Bae knots on rings

From master works by national treasures to the efforts of students who have been learning for a year, a simply amazing collection of knotted items were on display.

Most were traditional, decorative knot works including wall hangings, *norigae* (traditional Korean garb ornaments), *mizuhiki* (knotted paper cord sculptures), and *shifuku* (tea bag knots). There were also some whimsical pieces and a (token?) practical knot tyer who should definitely be a guild member. His display included six different quick-release cord bundles (some demonstrably useful as coshes), several sheepshank variants, and secure shoelace knots. I bought a copy of his book for my collection (https://www.amazon.co.jp/結びのはなし-平本-昭南/dp/4874409717).



Shinan Cord Storage

To stir the pot, I brought wire jump ring ‘knots’, a large scoubidou torus tied in boat line, some kumihimo braids converted to knots and some more traditional knots tied in nylon mesh tubes. Loren contributed a Turks Head bracelet and pouch.

Wang twisted taurus

While I was not there during the week of the exhibition, I was at the beginning of the first day (where row upon row of school-children waited outside until the facility officially opened) and the end of the last (a few members of the public were still roaming through even as we shut down), so I don’t have a good idea of the attendance but I will try to find out if I can. After the exhibit closed, I went to Korea for the briefest of knot-tourism visits and to chat with the president of the Korean Macramé Association about the idea of holding an exhibition in North America. When I first proposed the notion, I had expected a quick veto based on the fact that most of the participants are in Asia, but they wanted to mull it over and discuss it with me. As I’d hoped, they found our work a breath of fresh air.

Also, they take their mission of preservation, education and proselytization very seriously and believe that a main tool of these is exhibitions. An exhibition in North America would be reaching new people which is to be desired. The elders are cautiously interested and the younger members are keen to make the trip. The Korean Association will formally propose the idea to the Japanese and Chinese groups during their post-exhibit organizing of future exhibits.

Ezaki Mizuhiki phoenix

Organizing a future International Knot Exhibition (IKE) in North America

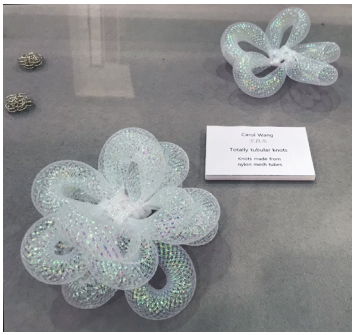
Firstly, there is no formal umbrella organization that puts on these IKEs that I'm aware of, just the various national groups agreeing that there should be an exhibit every few years. Let us call this group the IKE Committee (IKEC) and the grouping of member organizations the IKEO. I informally proposed a future IKE be held in North America under the auspices of the IGKT. It seemed to me that members of the IGKT would be interested in both seeing and participating in an IKE. Further, the Guild would benefit from a collaboration with other aspects of the knot tying world. This would be an opportunity to stage not just an international gathering, but a truly global event. If the IKEC decide 'yes' I expect to do a significant part of the organizational work, although I'd be very happy to have help. I hope to supplement exhibiting Guild members with micro macramé and basketry artisans, plus mathematical sculptors, among others. The basics of an IKE (from my sample of one) is not dissimilar to a Guild AGM (from my sample of 3 branch AGMs), so the logical thing to do would be to time an exhibition to coincide with an AGM. The IKEOs could ignore the IGKT business meeting and just go to the reception dinner.

Choi embroidered butterfly stars

Shin norigae

Add in a published exhibit catalogue, expand exhibit time from a weekend to a week, and double the countries involved. The scale of displayed items is also different, but how many would make the trek from Asia or the IGKT side of the world for that matter? Which countries would be participating and should the IGKT side be subdivided along lines that are not national in nature?

When discussing the matter with Korea, I bore in mind the possibility that I might be organizing solo, so proposed the exhibit be held in San Francisco, USA or Vancouver, Canada depending on timing. Hopefully, the rest of the Guild also see this as an exciting possibility and will help to help make it happen.



Wang tubular knots

Yoshimura floral knots

Tomiki Michiyo Chinese Japanese Zodiac

Lanyards in the Royal Navy

by AB Jessica Hewes

In general, a lanyard can be worn by anybody onboard as long as it has a purpose, I personally have made lanyards for Senior Marine Engineers (MEs) for their ear defenders (used for working in the machinery spaces) and I have made lanyards for keys in areas such as the Operations Room where there are many keys for the plethora of cupboards and safes etc. As seen in the BBC programme[1], I also made them for the bridge team as backup for their binoculars.

As a general rule, I like to make the lanyards look a bit more ornate depending on the rank of the person they are intended for. For example, the Captain's features a lot of gold and a lot of colour. Where the lanyards or rope work are intended for a more vigorous use, they tend to be a lot plainer.

As far as I'm aware there are actually no rules with regards to colour, I think it just depends on the ship and whether there is someone in the crew who is particularly fond of fiddly rope work.

Most of my lanyards are made from Gunline with the occasional use of coloured Nylon and 8mm Polypropylene with the core removed. Sometimes to make the rope go a bit further, and stop wastage, I'll use the core as a base line or for Turks heads.

Some Officers of the Watch (OOW) who move through the fleet over time, working on various bridges on various ships, will have their own personal lanyard that a Seamanship specialist made them once upon a time. They tend to take these with them as a memento; I personally have made a few lanyards for a couple of OOWs as they have left HMS Queen Elizabeth.

When our Captain got his lanyard, it was a bit controversial, as the previous Bosun (Chief Seamanship Specialist) made one for him before we sailed. I had made a few belts and a binoculars lanyard for the Yeoman (Bridge PO Seamanship specialist), which the Captain took a fancy to and asked me if I would make one for him instead of his first one. I'd like to think he'll take it with him when he leaves the ship.

1 BBC 2 series - *Britain's Biggest Warship* (HMS Queen Elizabeth) aired in April 2018

I usually tend to stick with colours relevant to the branch in which a person is serving; for example, I give Marine Engineers red lanyards, and Bridge/ Warfare persons tend to get blue, and officers get a lot of gold. It's totally a personal thing and other ships might do differently.

With regards to Port and Starboard Turks heads, anyone who works above the Flight deck tends to get Red and Green Turks heads, to help remind them of port and starboard, particularly the more junior personnel,. Some of the original lanyards I made were for fresh-out-of-the-box Able Seaman Seamanship Specialists working as Bridge lookouts where it's quite obviously important to know the difference, but also in the event of a Man Overboard, when stress is high, it's just a gentle reminder, and it also adds a bit more colour.

The people on board who are really good or passionate about fiddly rope work tend to originate from the Seamanship Branch, only because rope work is such an integral part of our training, with part of ship work and rigging involving a lot of splicing, dogging and whipping. The part of the ship that primarily deals with this is called the Rigging Party (Riggers), although all Seamanship Specialists are expected to know how to do all of the above at a moment's notice.

Every individual who joins the Royal Navy does at least one week of basic seamanship, learning basic knots and sea safety at HMS Raleigh. Seamanship Specialists do roughly 30 weeks of training, 22 weeks of Communication Training and 9 weeks of Seamanship Training. Four of these 9 weeks are dedicated to Rigging and Sewing, when we learn how to make a bell rope, splice MMFC and NFC (Manmade Fibre Cordage and Natural Fibre Cordage), different types of whipping and dogging, and the uses of different types of ropes/hawsers used in the Royal Navy. My main instructor was an Ex-Chief Seamanship Specialist employed to teach at HMS Raleigh, who I believe still works there.

The job of a Seamanship Specialist in my opinion is a nod to previous naval days of sea and sail, where everything is done by hand, sewn by hand and involves a lot of manual labour. Although sailing is no longer a piece of the puzzle, the main integral rules of Seamanship still apply. Therefore it's no surprise that Seamanship Specialists as a rule tend to be good with their hands, whether that's rope tying, sewing or fiddly rope work.

Our main ‘go-to’ guide is *BR 67 Admiralty Manual of Seamanship* and additionally *BR 2176 Sail Maker’s Guide*.

Throughout the fleet, I believe you will find various different types, shapes and colours of lanyards with crew making their own, bringing them from a previous ship, or they might just have someone on board who likes making things out of rope. There are no rules for this, as long as it is not offensive and doesn’t outrank a senior officer. Pretty much anyone can make or wear a lanyard with permission from that ship’s Commanding Officer.

Jessica Hewes

What led to my interest in the Royal Navy and my career as a Seamanship Specialist? Ever since I have been able to walk I have been sailing, racing and generally helping my father repair wooden boats. Hence my interest in a job that helps maintain, operate and protect ships, whilst working with my hands.

I’ve always been particularly arty, and after going through my training as a Seamanship Specialist I found decorative rope work to be very therapeutic and relaxing as a hobby. Once I understood the basics from training, it was easy enough to grow and self-teach with apps and books. I’ve made: belts for rigging sets (which hold a knife, pliers and a spike) and for keys, binoculars and ear defender lanyards, decorative barriers, decorative rope work for railings and stairwells etc. And at home: knot boards and bell ropes.

This is in addition to my daily job of repairing berthing lines, locally producing stray lines, heaving lines with Monkey’s fists on the end, splicing, whipping and dogging.

As a senior Able Seaman 1, soon to be Leading Seaman, it is one of my main jobs to help the Leading Seaman to train my junior colleagues and maintain skills within the department, though this doesn’t always involve decorative rope work, but more the commonly used skills such as knot tying and sewing.

I have *The Ashley Book of Knots* at home. Typical tools I’ll use on a daily basis are a fid, a sharp knife, spike, beeswax and twine all on my rigging set. At sea I spend about a good 10-12 hours a week tying and teaching knots and if time allows making decorative things in my spare time.

If I have the time and all the tools to hand I can make a basic lanyard in about an hour, if it’s a little more fancy then it may take a couple of hours.

We don’t have a ship’s wheel as such any more, it is more like a half wheel/joystick so unfortunately no Turks Head! There is a decorative barrier on the bridge to prevent too many people congregating in the way of the Navigating Officer, particularly when it is busy, and some Turks Heads decorate the signal projectors as well as up the stairwell.

A Clove-hitched Fabric, Tibetan style

by Europa Chang Dawson

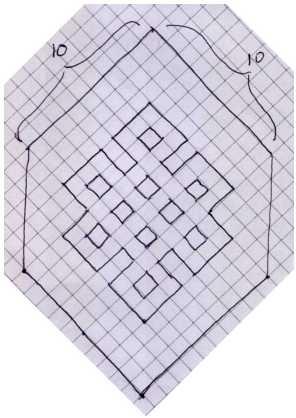
In October 2016, Rodrick Owen of the Braid Society, and erstwhile member of IGKT, sent me some images taken by Jennie Parry, also of the Braid Society, and reproduced here with their permission.

The images above show part of the front and back of a piece known to be Tibetan, and at one time on loan to the Pitt-Rivers Museum in Oxford, while the green image to the side is Owen's chart of the design. After the exhibition the piece was returned to the owner, and no-one knows where it is now. Rodrick, knowing my fascination for double-sided fabrics, thought I would enjoy trying to work out the technique, despite not being able to see the original.

My first step was to show the image to a Tibetan waiter in a restaurant in Bath, with his young grand-daughter interpreting. He said that the double-sided counter-change structure is one used for pieces hanging in temples and lamassery chapels, possibly made as an aid to meditation. Certainly the technique develops patience!

If you knot a friendship bracelet using Clove Hitches (CHs) and two colours only, the cloven side of the band will show the clefts at right angles with each colour-change. [cf Stuart Grainger's *Knotted Fabrics* – Cavandoli work.] The reverse, however, shows all the diagonals running parallel along the row; this side is usually described as the right side of the band. In the Tibetan variation, two bands are worked back-to-back (cloven sides concealed) with the colours counter-changed to give the results shown. Cords move from front to back to give a slightly quilted effect. As the motifs have been designed

on a diagonally-set grid, and all the rows knotted along a downward-sloping diagonal, the finished piece will show ‘stitches’ running along the length of the band. The only knot used throughout is the CH tied cleft up, cleft down, over cores that run SE or SW (where NS is the axis of the band and N is the start).



Eternity chart

If you care to explore this particular incarnation of macramé, then for your first piece I suggest you follow the charted pattern (left) for the Buddhist symbol of Eternity. The technique works best for a soft-laid cord, and you will need 10x1m in each of two colours. [I used double-knitting cotton in black and a variegated contrast simply because that was the only combination I had to hand where the two cords were of the same thickness.] It is worth pointing out that each white square in the diagram represents a knot.

Not having seen the original, I had to find my own solution for starting. This method seems to work: Middle each of the 20 cords and lock them together to give two black ends locked with two contrast ends. Arrange them as below.

The ends below the twining points of the pairs are used to knot the Contrast layer (background black and motif in contrast). Tie three rows of knots – cleft side up – over the contrast cords, making sure the locking twists lie close to the knots so as to make a tidy edge.

[It may help to pin the twining points before starting.] Then tie three further

The picture shows two of the three rows completed.

CHs with each of the remaining black cords of the Contrast set so as to complete the ^ edges of the border; this will also hold one set of cords in position, making the Primary layer easier to tie.

[At this point, I found it helpful to tuck a corner of paper over the Contrast set of cords.]

The upper set of ends are now turned down, and CHs are tied with the motif in black on a coloured background.The image shows the ends ready to be

turned down. Remember to work along the same diagonal slant, and to tie the CHs with the cleft side DOWN. Now all the ends should be secure, and the fiddliest part of the exercise is over. It is worth taking time to set up everything evenly before removing the corner of paper.

The more interesting colour work begins at this stage. The principle is straightforward: the design is made by tying the CHs in the appropriate colour of cord, always remembering to keep the cleft side of each knot facing into the space between the two layers. In general, at each knot there will be a cord of each colour, but when it is necessary for a knot to be tied with both ends of the same colour[1] the cords in the corresponding positions of the two layers exchange places. I always bring the Contrast cord to the front to the right of its 'twin' so that everything twines the same way. It is equally possible to bring up the Contrast cord on the left; the important thing is to be consistent.

When a complete slant row is finished, the Contrast edge cord is brought up from the right of its Primary twin and down again on its left. This locks the edge and gives a twist-effect. Remember, the same process needs to be on both edges!

For me, the least confusing sequence of working is to tie the knots of the Contrast row and then the corresponding Primary row ones, and to work in the same direction always – in my case, along the ↙ diagonal.

This means I need to keep checking that the right-hand edge of the work is kept straight, but my ends of cord are kept in better order. Every cord, core or knotting, travels in the direction in which it began until it reaches a vertical edge, when it twines round the corresponding cord 'below' and turns through a right angle to re-enter the work. In making this turn, it also changes from core- to knotting-cord (or vice versa).

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1 This is necessary when the two 'stitches' below the knot need to be tied in the same colour. Check with the chart.

If you need to join on some extra cord, tie in the new length with a reef knot and tuck the knot and ends between the two layers. The join does not need to take

Contrast side

Primary side

much strain, only to hide the hole left by the two ends. If the join is in the core cord, I overlap the two cores for three knots, then tie a thumb knot as close as possible to the overlap, for each cord, that is. (Left and right, below)

For finishing off you are on your own! My first attempt [below] shows the ends knotted off and then tied into the core for the following two CHs.

It is obvious that the start and finishing ends are differently angled. Now I cut off the end about 1cm below the knots, tuck them into the 'sandwich' space and sew the edges discreetly – but this leaves me with a sneaking feeling of having cheated.

There is always the dust-catcher fringe, of course, or tassels. You will have to find your own solution. All suggestions for finishing would be much appreciated.

Let's Hear It for Hemp

by Gordon Teenan

Some of us are tired of getting our ears bent about how wonderful modern cordage is. Little or no mention is made of what lies behind it. Its manufacture demands a great deal of precious non-renewable resources, (why do you think the Chinese have gone to the trouble of landing on the far side of the moon, cunningly out of sight, if not to seek out more?), extremely sophisticated processes with an enormous appetite for electricity, becoming increasingly difficult to join or splice, beyond the skills of most of its users, apart from needing £40-worth of queer stainless fids and two pages of instructions. People persist in that horrible habit of setting it alight to effect a back splice or substitute for whipping. It can be found on the beach, lost from fishing vessels. If its tensile strength is so wondrous, what's it doing there? Notice how it has become amazingly friable, infesting the world's oceans with tiny bits of material, soon you won't be able to go for a swim without getting a free flossing.

People who use it by way of occupation or recreation, are rope access practitioners, climbers (call that a 'recreation'?), not to mention potholers (subterranean, cold, wet, at risk of being crushed or drowned). All sounds a whole heap of fun like bog snorkeling! I grant you it is a good trick that the rope they use seems to work equally well for both positive and negative altitudes! Have you seen those tests where a man is suspended by a piece of this stuff and it is cut through 'till there is virtually nothing left? The point is that they are all advised to replace their cordage at least annually, what is all that all about? The other problem is that wear or damage is very difficult to detect, being sheathed.

Ultraviolet degradation, scary when you see it, especially in 'pretend' hemp when you can take a length in each hand and it just pulls apart. You might have had your foot on it, at height! Most braid-on-braid type material is redundant, bulked up only to make it useable, to stop it slicing your hands to the bone. Let it slip and you get a very unpleasant burn (not that there is any other sort). The stuff is devoid of character and never lasts long enough to reach the nirvana of becoming patinated. Who needs pretty coloured rope in order to tell one from another? The sailors of old didn't, regardless of the weather or light levels.

What alternatives do we have? I'll tell you: rope of any diameter you like, made of vegetable matter, recyclable, renewable (those modern magic words) grows in the ground all on its own, very user-friendly, feels good, even smells good; add some Stockholm Tar and it can soothe the savage breast!

The Vikings sailed to Greenland and beyond with it; the ancient Phoenicians sailed round Africa using it, made from the date palm, albeit black and amazingly rough on the hands; the Egyptians got all across the Atlantic with their own home-grown version.

Later on, ships of Her Majesty's Navy, HMS Terror and Erebus, spent three years or so in the early part of the nineteenth century surveying the Antarctic continent. Sailors, predecessors of those who sailed aboard those greyhounds of the sea - the tea clippers and grain ships - the foretop men, elite athletes, sent aloft in Southern Ocean gales to shorten sail, standing on thin footropes of manila or hemp. Every bit of cordage could have been fabricated from raw material carried aboard. Not for them the luxury of ship's articles stating 'All cordage to be replaced every x hours at sea or annually whichever comes sooner'. Rigging maintenance was an ongoing exercise, with lives at stake in the event of failure, a critically important exercise if it might be yours.

Later still, English aristocrats, the playboys of their day, in the early part of the 1900s went a long way towards taming the Alps with what would now be considered a bit dodgy for washing line! I would be interested to learn what they used in 1953 to get up Everest, and back down again for that matter. It must have concentrated their minds wonderfully, and demonstrated their skills. The chances of surviving a fall from any height would have been low, so you would soon become skilled at avoiding one. Now it seems you can fall a 100 ft, bounce up and down for a little, while admiring the view, 'till your companion pulls you up with a patent widget to continue where you fell off, (or let go). Gone are the days of just knocking-up a Prussic hitch with a spare bit of stuff in your trouser pocket.

The point is that their lives, or the safety of their ships, all depended on simple vegetable stuff in the form of sisal, hemp, manila, papyrus, nettles, cotton or whatever. These natural materials have served us well for a few thousand years, from building the pyramids to dispatching the guilty. Possibly it needs a bit more skill to get it to do what you want, but as the Chinese would say 'All the tea in China isn't worth the mastery of a small skill'. You really needed to know what you were doing.

That's what an apprenticeship was for: such as learning when it looks like a good idea to replace a rope, or knowing not to let a load turn, to avoid the rope used to unload it twisting. If you have seen old film footage of ships being unloaded, you might have noticed a cord running from a corner of the load - that was what it was for. (See *ABOK* chapter 28 heading picture).

It is, or was, cheap, reliable, biodegradable and renewable. Anyone with half a wit could make a useable rope from the raw materials to suit their purpose.

We could do worse than stop growing vast acres of sugar cane in Brazil, and get back to 'real' rope.

I could have filled this rant with technical tables, but they don't mean a lot when it comes to tonnage, working load, breaking strain, whether wet, dry or just damp etc. A bit like when Professor Brian Cox starts talking about 30 million light years or a trillion solar masses. Who even knows what their car weighs, not that they are likely to lift the thing.

Anyone likely to use real rope should be able to put their hand on it and think, 'that'll do nicely'. Just use the right knot, remember that it could halve the breaking strain, and make a note of where you, or what it is attached to, will end up if it all goes wrong. The bottom line is this: natural beats synthetic every time, it's the feel-good factor, whether you have a piece in your hands in front of the fire practising a sinnet bend, or you've just knocked up a Poldo Tackle to put some tension in your back stay.

Prize or Prizes or No Prize - It's a ~~Lottery~~ Raffle

A number of members attending IGKT meetings over the years have commented on the apparent statistical anomaly whereby if you win one prize in the raffle you usually win more than one, irrespective of how many tickets you buy. In order to test this we decided to try and collect some data starting with the 2018 Stourport meeting (see summary below). This is not entirely complete as we know there were actually a total of 1035 tickets sold although we only recorded the results for 980. The chances are that the holders of these 55 unrecorded tickets did not win prizes though we failed to note in advance the total number of prizes on offer. Tut, tut – we'll do better in the future!

7 people with a total of 210 tickets between them didn't win any prize
12 people with a total of 285 tickets between them won 1 prize
4 people with a total of 150 tickets between them won 2 prizes
4 people with a total of 180 tickets between them won 3 prizes
1 person with a total of 55 tickets won 6 prizes
1 person with a total of 100 tickets won 8 prizes

It's a bit of fun but quite interesting. Our aim is to continue collecting data at future meetings with the co-operation of members so that eventually when we have enough figures to make it worthwhile we can get someone with good statistical knowhow to analyse the results and see if they are in any way unusual. We look forward to your continued support!

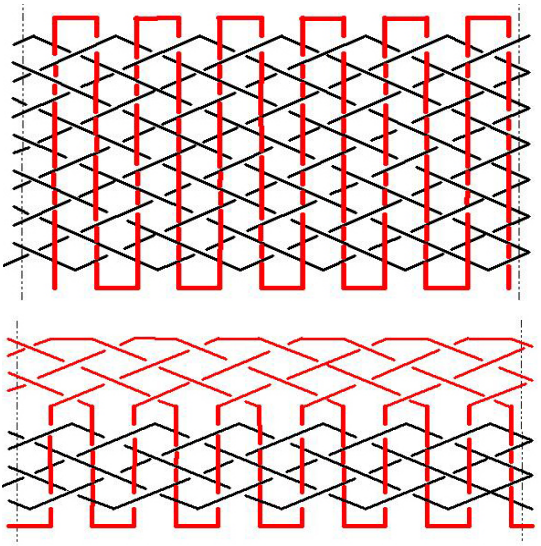
Penny Bodger

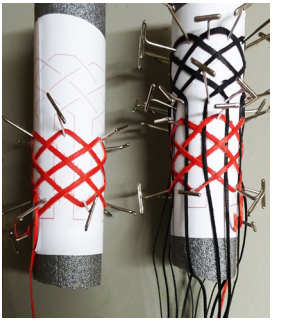
Triaxial Turks Head

by Maurice McPartlan

When *KM* went to press in December 2018, I thought I was finished with triaxials for the time being, but a simple question dragged me back! This was an "I wonder if/how" moment, that had me opening my technical drawing programme for the first time in many years.

Could I make a Turks Head-form of a triaxial pattern? As the base plait for a triaxial is over-2, under-1 in one hand and under-2 and over-1 in the other, I knew that my TH would need to have 3*x* bights. As the vertical interweave of the triaxial is over-3 and under-3, I also knew that I would not be able to get a full set of vertical interweaves, as this would require leads and bights to have a common divisor.





All this led me to try 6B x 13L. For the interweave, I realised that there would be twelve of them and so there would be two between each end of a bight. The simplest solution for the interweave was to zig-zag up and down which was then followed by the possibility of jumping from one interweave to the eighth. In order to keep these interweaves tidy, I plaited them so that they effectively closed the ends of the knot.

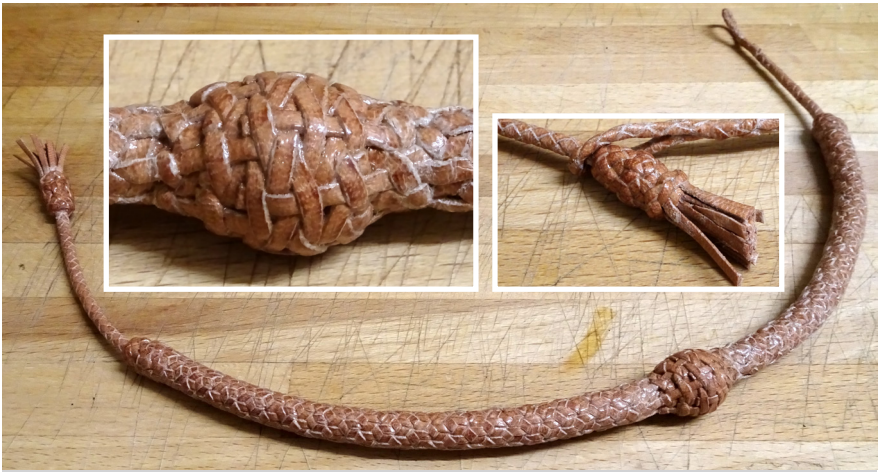
Another 'evolution' comes from the fact that the original 6B x 13L TH interweave starts at the bottom of the TH, which then leaves one lead to cross in order to exit the knot, and so the next option had to be to design a TH where

the extra leads balanced on both sides of the TH, with the O3 or U3 overlaps centred. This led to other possibilities. In fact I was drawing knots quicker than I could tie them![1]

One other option that came to mind was that the simplest interweave pattern could represent the vertical interweaves of a triaxial plait onto which the TH was placed.

To the right, detail of a red 6B x5L with an end-weave ready to go on a plait.

This led me to make the piece below which consists of a 12-strand triaxial plait over a 6-strand ordinary plait. The ends of the triaxial are covered with a 6Bx5Ls with end weaves. The centre knot is three triaxial THs layered on top of each other: 6B x 17L + 11L + 5L with the interweave through them all.



As a final thought, I tied a 9B x 17L Triaxial TH in paracord (with core removed) to show that it works too.

Is this a new knot, and if it is, what should it be called? Looking through Hall's *Introduction to Turk's Head Knots* and other sources, I think that it could be called a Triaxial Turks Head, but am open to suggestions. One characteristic of this knot is that it forms an extremely stable cylinder.

1. Rather than filling the pages with drawings that might, but probably won't, be of interest, several have been placed in the *KM* supplements section of the IGKT website www.igkt.net, and I would be very happy to provide others if needed.

Knot Book Donation

My friend Ken Yalden and I have been colluding since 2016 to ensure that some of Gordon Perry's knot books go to a deserving home. It has taken me this long to get some 20 books back to Australia.

On the 27th of October, World Maritime Day in Freemantle (an annual event promoted by the Company of Master Mariners of which I have been an associate member for 15 years) was the day I donated these books to the Leeuwin Ocean Adventure Foundation and their vessel Sail Training Ship Leeuwin (right). The books were presented to Carol Shannon the CEO, who was thrilled to receive them and said she was honoured to accept them on behalf of Leeuwin Ocean Adventure.

The books will be added to the library for use by their trainees.

Robert Underhill

IGKT meeting in Australia in 2019

It has been decided to hold a meeting in Australia in 2019 under the IGKT banner, underwritten & organised by Andromeda Industries Pty Ltd

Sat 6th and Sun 7th July 2019 at
West Tamworth League Club, 58 Phillip St,
West Tamworth NSW Australia 2340

Phone: 02 6765 7588

Australian and International members are invited to come and display their work over two days. Dinner on Saturday night.
Demonstrations of work will be highly desirable.

Cost recovery contribution from members about A$75 each

Application forms are available on the IGKT website www.igkt.net

World Knot Tying Day – 18th December

On 18th of December every year, individuals and groups around the world – at home, work or play - will be asked to take time to be photographed while tying a knot (any knot, basic or sensational, knots that do stuff or that just look good) and then share the photograph over a media platform linked to #WorldKnotTyingDay.

This project was the idea of one of our founders, Geoffrey Budworth and the Solent (UK) branch, and is fully endorsed by the Guild's Trustees and Executive Committee.

Why December 18th? Because the major figure of 20th century knotting, and author of The Ashley Book of Knots (1944), was born (1881) and also died (1947) on that date. This makes it a very fitting day to celebrate knot tying.

How to be involved?

1 Local branches worldwide can publicize the event in their locality
2 Individuals should send their own photographs to the collection and encourage friends, neighbours and colleagues to do so, not only IGKT members.
3 World Knot Tying Day will be promoted in all the countries where we have members.

If you are able to assist in publicizing and extending this new venture in your area, please let the Executive Committee Secretary, David Pepper, know what you can do - at execsec@igkt.net

Details of where and how to send the pictures will be released later in the year.

Remembering Fallen Bellringers

Since the start of the Great War in 1914, bellringers have rung on Remembrance Day to commemorate those who lost their lives in this and other wars, and to remember all those involved

To honour and celebrate this ringing, Winchester and Portsmouth Diocesan Guild of Church Bellringers is producing two identical books, one to be presented to Portsmouth Cathedral and the other to Winchester Cathedral, which will be a record of all these occasions including the significant amount of ringing which took place in 2018. The records include details of the fallen, when and where the ringers rang and the names of the ringers. The presentations will take place at special services at the two Cathedrals as follows:

12th May 2019 at 6.00pm at Portsmouth Cathedral
19th May 2019 at 3.30pm at Winchester Cathedral

The Guild has been invited to send a representative to one or both of these services and the reception afterwards, when they will have an opportunity to meet some of the bellringers.

The Trustees would like the Guild to be represented, so are seeking a volunteer who would like to take up this invitation. If you are interested, please contact David Bodger at secretary@igkt.net as soon as possible.

REVIEWS

Christmas 2018 saw two string-related presents from thoughtful family members! As I had never seen them before, I thought others might be interested.

The first is called *Cat's Cradle*, (£3.99) made by House of Marbles. The game consists of a loop of pink paracord and a six-page fold-out of instructions on how to make five different patterns. The packaging is attractive, but I would have liked a bit more background to the origin of, and sources for, each of the patterns. Also, I found the instructions difficult to follow – it is possible that this sort of activity is much easier when watching someone else do it? I seem to remember Cat's Cradles being a two-person activity, but suppose that this would have been even more difficult to illustrate!

The second game hails from Australia called *Knot So Fast* (£30) and is made by Think Fun. This game actually comes in two formats: one for a single player, the other for 2–4 players. Both contain some 40 knots, graded from beginner to expert, which the players have to tie. Our own Des Pawson is acknowledged as the game's "expert consultant". In the competitive format, players compete to tie the chosen knot and gain points. There are many more details and nuances in the instructions. This might remind members of the 'six-knot challenge'.

The editors gave it a go and had some fun. I can see families or youth groups using this as a game, and for teaching. Members could add knots if they had any others in mind. It is a pity the quality of the cords is so poor.

McP

IGKT Spring meeting & AGM 2019

AT THE NOTHE FORT IN WEYMOUTH, DORSET UK

9TH-12TH MAY 2019

FULL DETAILS & APPLICATION FORM CAN BE FOUND ON THE IGKT WEBSITE www.igkt.net

OBITUARIES

Tony Fisher

We were sad to learn of the passing of Tony on 16th October 2018, following a long illness. Tony had been heavily involved in the organisation of the New Zealand Chapter of the IGKT, and was a former President. He had been a member of the IGKT since the 1980s until a few years ago when he suffered a stroke.

Tony started rigging and working at height in 1958, although his main career was in education. He was a fluent speaker of the Maori language. In 1992, he was awarded a Fellowship of the New Zealand Educational Institute.

He also became chief rigger of the floating crane *Hikitea*, moored in Wellington harbour (right), specialising in heavy lifts and wire rope splicing.

During the early part of this century, Tony and Caroline, his wife, spent some time in the UK. While Caroline was teaching English, Tony helped with the re-rigging of the *Golden Hinde* at St Mary Overie Dock in London and *HMS Gannet* at Chatham Historic Dockyard in Kent. It was during his time here that he was encouraged to record his perspective on working at height. *Proud to be High*, was published as a booklet in which Tony recorded his ten maxims for safe working, and it was also serialised in *KM*s 82 and 83.

Tony is survived by his wife and family in New Zealand. Colin Grundy

Jimmy Ray Williams

We are sorry to have to report that Jimmy Ray Williams, of Torrance, California, died on 25th January after a short illness. An appreciation of the man, his life and his work, will appear in the June issue of Knotting Matters.

YORKSHIRE BRANCH ANNUAL REPORT

Throughout 2018 the Yorkshire Branch has been busy as usual, having representation at numerous events, including:

- March Branch meeting , opening subject was 'Knotted Toys'.
- May Skipton Waterways Festival, always a popular event
- May IGKT AGM Loughborough
- May Hope Pastures Animal Sanctuary
- May Newton le Willows Rural Craft Fair supporting the North West Branch
- July Skipton Sheep day
- July St. Gemma's Hospice Summer Fair
- August Rodley nature Reserve Summer Fair
- August Brighouse Artisan Fair
- August Elland Vintage Fair (amazing Lancaster bomber fly past!)
- October IGKT Half Yearly meeting at Stourton on Severn

November Branch meeting, opening subject Splicing.

These events were attended and staffed by 2-10 members.

PROPOSED EVENTS FOR 2019

March 17th Sunday Branch meeting, opening subject 'Finishing Rope Ends'
April 21st Sunday Rodley Nature Reserve Easter Egg Hunt
May 4th Saturday Skipton Waterways Festival
May 9-12th IGKT AGM Weymouth
July 7th Sunday Skipton Sheep Day
Aug 17th Saturday Rodley Nature Reserve Summer Fair
Aug 25th Sunday Brighouse Artisan Fair
November 17th Sunday Branch meeting, opening subject .... TBA

There will be more but they are at present unconfirmed, so please watch this space. Some of these events will be fully staffed, but we always welcome visitors to our events or meetings, so please contact David for further details.

Our Branch meetings are always held on Sundays 11am to 4pm, bring your own lunch but drinks and afternoon tea provided. The theme of the day usually lasts about an hour and the rest of the day is spent sharing knowledge, discussing problems, and socialising. Average attendance is 20, many not from Yorkshire at all, but anyone is welcome. Please contact David before you come, if you are not on our usual notification list.

David Pearson Phone 0113 2572689 wayzegoose_uk@yahoo.co.uk

BRANCHES

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Venue: Historische Werf «de Delft»
Schiehaven 15, 3024 EC, Rotterdam

New Zealand

All enquries about this branch: contact the Guild's Web Administrator.

United Kingdom

Dorset - UK

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Midlands - UK

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Netherton, Dudley, DY2 9PY

North West England - UK

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Tel: +44 (0)1606 590 729
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Solent - UK

http://igkt-solent.co.uk
Contact: Chris Jenkins
igktchris@btinternet.com
Tel: +44 (0)2392 601 779
Venue: Fareham Sailing and Motor Boat Club, Lower Quay, Fareham, Hampshire PO16 0RA

Surrey - UK

www.surreyknots.org.uk
Contact: Tony Shellard
secretary@surreyknots.org.uk
Tel: +44(0)1483 502 156
Venue: Guildford District Scout Centre, Nightingale Road, Guildford, GU1 1ER

West Country Knotters - UK

Contact: Richard Hopkins
richardhopkins907@gmail.com
Tel: +44 (0)1179 867 146
Venue: The Benjamin Perry Boathouse, Phoenix Wharf, Lower Guinea Street, Bristol BS1 6TJ

Yorkshire - UK

Contact: David Pearson
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Venue: Pudsey Scout Headquarters, The Lanes, Pudsey, LS28 7AS

United States of America

Alaskan Branch - USA

Contact: Charles Rigden
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Venue: Anchorage Senior Center, 1300 East 19th Avenue, AK 99501

North American Branch - Knot in the Middle - USA

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Contact: John Staley
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Tel: +(1) 1 905 389 2509

North American Branch - Mid-Atlantic Region - USA

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Pacific Americas - USA

www.igktpab.org/
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Tel: +(1) 1 310 679 6864
Venue: Los Angeles Maritime Institute 73 Berth Suite 2, San Pedro, CA 90731

All branch details as on IGKT website on 25/2/19

BACK COVER: Shinan - Quick-release cord storage see p22

IGKT SALES	GBP
A New System of Knotting by Harry Asher A new reprint - Harry's creative genius is evident in both his study of knots and his own very useful creations	£7.00
Knotty Potty by 'Jennifer Wren' A final collection of the aphorisms of Geoffrey Budworth	£4.00
Charlie's Knots by Charlie Smith A very personal and easy approach to tying Turks Heads (and other knots) directly in the hand	£3.00
A Practical Approach to Circular Knotworks by Alexander & Christoffer Åström A thorough step-by-step treatment of making circular knots based on Celtic pattern #295	£10.00
A Fresh Approach to Knotting and Ropework by Charles Warner A reprint of this comprehensive and readable work with over 500 clear diagrams	£15.00
A Booklet on Lanyards by Willeke van der Ham A very easy-to-follow introduction to making useful lanyards	£4.00
Design and Make Rope Mats and Rosettes by Nils Kristian Rossing "Recipes" for many circular mats and instructions for using a free downloadable programme to create many others	£10.00
Knotcraft by Stuart Grainger A much-loved book about decorative knotting	£4.00
Turkshead Alternatives by Stuart Grainger Decorative chains and grommets	£3.00
Knotted Fabrics by Stuart Grainger Making mats, covers and baskets etc	£10.00
The DIY Book of Fenders by Colin Jones Does exactly what it says	£10.00
Turksheads the Traditional Way by Eric Franklin A really useful introduction	£3.00
Knotted Novelties by Eric Franklin Reprint of Nylon Novelties	£3.00
Advanced Knotting by Maurice McPartlan An excellent DVD with patterns for complex turksheads	£12.00
Breathing Apparatus Guidelines by Colin Grundy A fascinating story	£4.00
A Study of the Chair Knot by Colin Grundy An excellent review of this important knot	£4.00
Concerning Crosses and More by Brian Field Flat Knots tied in hand	£3.00
Breastplate Designs by Brian Field to make and wear	£3.00
Sailmakers' Palms by Des Pawson 2018 (2010 edition expanded) A history and background of styles and variations of palms, how they are made and some templates for DIY	£12.00
A Comprehensive Text of Turk's Head Knots by James Harvey - a reprint of this great book	£16.00
The Sailor and His Knots by Clifford W Ashley Reprint of the forerunner of ABOK	£10.00
Monographs 1 - 14 Des Pawson - Various prices	
IGKT Car Window Sticker	£1.00
IGKT Cloth Badge	£4.00
IGKT Ditty Bag - 9in high x 6.5in across base. Without lanyard	£9.00
IGKT Enamel Badge - clasp or pin fitting	£4.00

Please e-mail supplies@igkt.net with your order stating your full postal address to which the items should be sent. We will return a payment request to you (including postage & packing) so that you can make secure payment by PayPal online, using any card.

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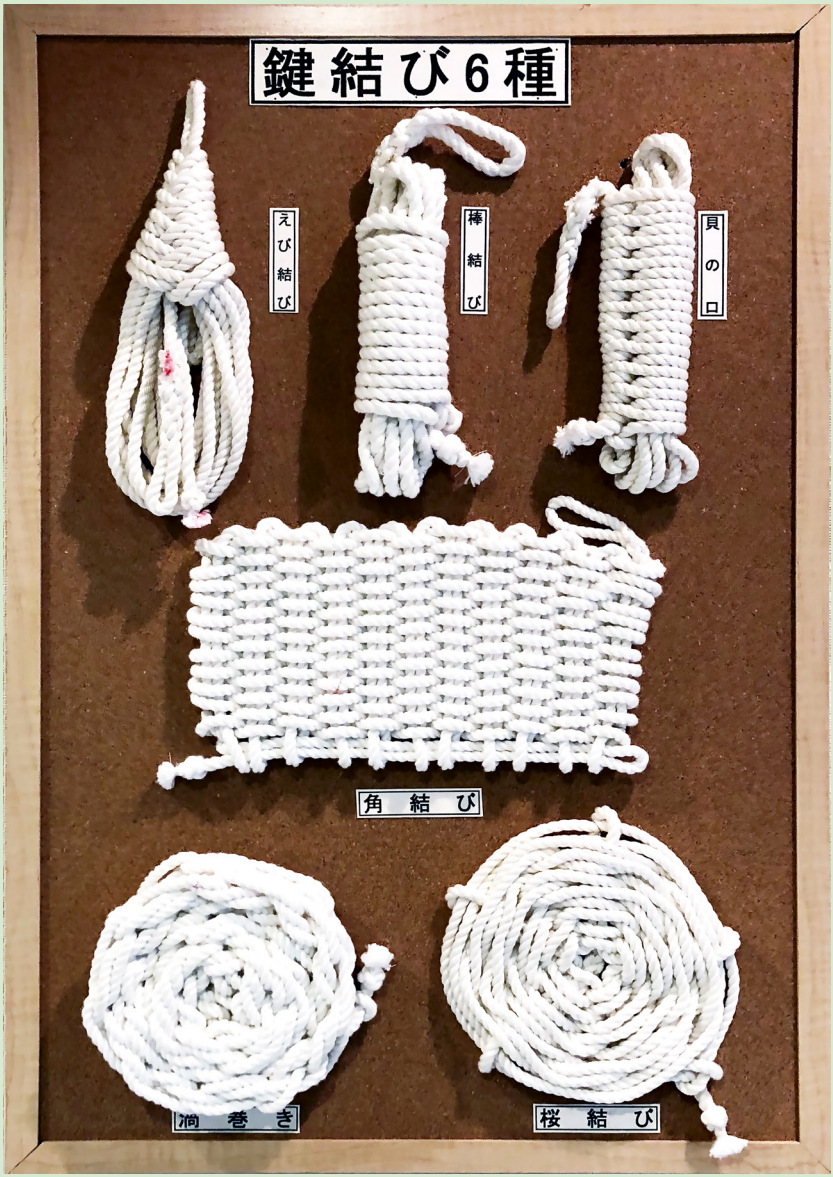
IGKT Supplies Secretary

18, Beverley Crescent, Woodford Green, IG8 9DD UK (Tel +44 (0)20 8504 4544)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えび結び
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貝の口
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渦巻き
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